



CALIFORNIA ORIGINALS

A Quarterly Newsletter of the California State Archives
A Division of the California Secretary of State's Office
www.sos.ca.gov/archives

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Fall 2012

October is Archives Month!

October is [American Archives Month](#), which celebrates archives and archivists to raise public awareness of the value and importance of archival materials. This year the California State Archives is hosting three related events.

Archives Month will kick off with an October 6 open house during the second annual Sacramento Archives Crawl. This all-day event will be a celebration of *Building Sacramento, Building Communities*. The State Archives and three other local repositories will host the event. Participants will be able to go on behind-the-scenes tours, view special exhibits, talk with archivists, learn about other northern California archives and related institutions, and more. For more information, visit www.sacarchivescrawl.blogspot.com.

The 14th annual Family History Day on October 13 will feature more than 20 free classes for people interested in learning how to research their family tree. For more information, visit fhdnewslines.blogspot.com.

A free one-day Preservation Workshop for people who work in an archives-related field will be offered on October 24. State Archives staff will teach basic preservation techniques for repairing paper-based materials. For more information, visit www.sos.ca.gov/archives/preservation.

The 2012 California Archives Month poster *Building Bridges to the Past* features images of some of California's most iconic bridges. The poster is available for download at www.calarchivesmonth.org.

By Stephanie Hamashin and Sebastian Nelson, Archives Month Committee Members

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From Secretary of State Bowen

Welcome to the inaugural edition of *California Originals*, a compilation of news and resources from the State Archives Division of the California Secretary of State's Office. As a life-long student of history, it is my honor to serve as the custodian of the State Archives in my capacity as Secretary of State. Established in 1850, the State Archives is home to tens of millions of documents, maps, photographs, film and audio recordings, and other treasures that document the rich history of California.

During Archives Month and all year long, I invite you to explore our state's early history and learn more about the resources offered at the State Archives and other repositories across the state. The archivists and other staff at the Secretary of State's office are dedicated to collecting and preserving our most important historic records for generations to come. Peruse the website at www.sos.ca.gov/archives and consider dropping by our research room in Sacramento. Excellent staff are on hand every weekday to provide tailored assistance with your next research project.

"Preserving and Promoting the History of California"



Records in the Spotlight

Department of Water Resources Record Group

From the days of California's Gold Rush, water has played a central role in the development of our state. Water disputes bubble up during floods and droughts, over irrigation and distribution, and in battles among urban and agricultural interests. The ongoing battle over water is documented in several record groups held at the California State Archives. Comprising nearly 2,000 cubic feet of records, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) record group is the largest water-related collection at the State Archives and it is one of the most difficult record groups to access.

Beginning in the 1940s, DWR created its own coding system to organize records. This presents a challenge for archivists when it comes to arranging the records. Normally, archivists follow the archival principle of provenance, which is organizing records hierarchically by their administrative units. In addition to provenance, archivists want to maintain the original order of the records within the subgroup. With coded collections such as DWR, in which the codes are applied to the entire department, archivists are unable to arrange by administrative unit; however, archivists retain the original coding as an integral part of the organization of the records.

To increase access to the DWR records, state archivists created a database that will capture the codes and subject matter found within each folder. This DWR coding database contains fields for accession number, date range, and code description. The project has also allowed the Archives to identify preservation needs of these records, some of which date to the early 1900s. Currently, the database is only available at the State Archives Reference Desk.

By Jeff Crawford, Archivist, Accessioning/Processing Program Lead

"Comprised of nearly 2,000 cubic feet, the Dept. of Water Resources Record Group is the largest water-related collection at the Archives . . ."

It has been estimated that 90% of today's records are created electronically . . . most never see paper!

Program Notes

An Introduction to the Electronic Records Program

Spreadsheets, server space, social media... If you use a computer, you are probably familiar with all these terms. Remember floppy disks? Do you still have a hard drive that can read them? California state government is creating more and more "born digital" items – records that may never see paper and may be ephemeral, at best. Archivists are tackling the challenge of capturing, preserving, and making these electronic resources accessible to the public. State archivists must determine the means by which California's historically valuable electronic resources can be preserved for current and future generations. The mission of the Electronic Records Program is to facilitate the acquisition, management, and preservation of, and access to, this specific set of government records. The California State Archives is building the infrastructure, educating state government and other stakeholders, and doing the research to ensure that later generations will be able to read these digital records.

By Rebecca Wendt, Electronic Records Archivist



Program News

State Records Appraisal Program presents Athena

Athena is the California State Archives' newest online tool for researching state government record-keeping practices and identification of records with potential archival value. Athena is a web-based system that contains scans of state agency records retention schedules back to 1991. Retention schedules give agencies the legal authority to dispose of records once the approved retention period has been met.

Appraisal of state agency records begins long before records cross the State Archives threshold, and ends only when staff physically review, re-house, describe, and make the records accessible to the public, barring any legal or physical restrictions.

California's State Records Management Act requires that each state agency maintain a record retention schedule that details the public records the agency will keep, how the records will be managed, and how the agency will legally dispose of non-permanent records. The California Department of General Services oversees state agencies' compliance with the rules and procedures the Department established regarding record retention.

State archivists do not create the schedules, but the schedules are an essential part of the archivists' state records review process. Archivists periodically review records to identify those with historic value that might be transferred to the State Archives at the end of their retention periods. Once transferred, such records are examined by archivists who determine whether the records should be retained in the State Archives. This appraisal process includes reviewing the records for legal, administrative and fiscal values (such as legal opinions, policies, and procedures), as well as for evidential and informational values. Less than five percent of all records created by state agencies have archival value.

Explore Athena at www.sos.ca.gov/archives/athena

*By Sydney Bailey and Andrew Hyslop,
State Records Appraisal Program Archivists*



Meet the Staff

State Archivist Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil



Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil has been an archivist with the State Archives Division of the California Secretary of State's office since 1987. She was appointed State Archivist in February 2006, the first woman to be State Archivist in California history.

Nancy is a Certified Archivist and member of the Academy of Certified Archivists. She was recently elected a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, the highest honor given by the Society, for her outstanding contributions to the archival profession. She is a member of the Society of California Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), and the Council of State Archivists (CoSA).

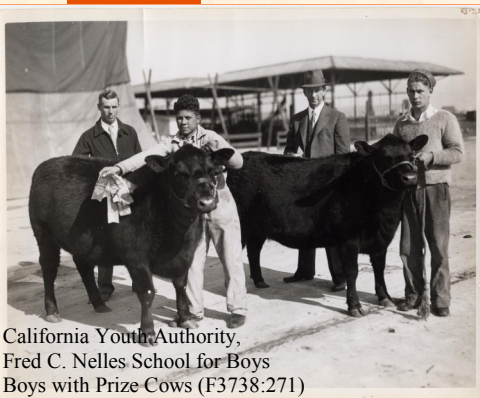
She has a Master of Arts degree in History with a Graduate Certificate in Archival Administration from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

Nancy lives in the foothills of California's historic gold country with her husband and two-year-old twins.



New Exhibit Info

California Cattle: A History



California Youth Authority,
Fred C. Nelles School for Boys
Boys with Prize Cows (F3738:271)

The California State Archives wants to steer you toward *California Cattle*, an exhibit focusing on the development of the Golden State and its cattle industries. For the exhibit, archivists rounded up cattle-related records from the State Archives collections including Spanish and Mexican land grant maps, colorful product trademarks, state agency photographs, and other interesting items. From the original herd brought to California by Spanish explorers to our state's current status as a leading beef and dairy producer, the exhibit touches on topics such as early California ranches, legislation regulating the dairy and beef industries, efforts to improve livestock health, the State Fair, and the prize-winning herds of state institutions. *California Cattle* will open in the State Archives' fourth floor gallery October 1, just in time for Archives Month!

By Melissa Tyler and Andrew Hyslop, Exhibit Coordinators



Secretary of State, Trademark Records
Home Creamery, filed in 1897 (TM2900)

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Contact
October 6	Sacramento Archives Crawl	sacarchivescrawl.blogspot.com
October 13	Family History Day	fhdnewsline.blogspot.com
October 24	Preservation Workshop	Stephanie.Hamashin@sos.ca.gov
October 26	Monthly Public Tour	ArchivesEvents@sos.ca.gov
November 6	General Election	www.sos.ca.gov/elections
November TBD	Electronic Records Webinar	Laren.Metzer@sos.ca.gov
December 4	Basic Archives Workshop	Laren.Metzer@sos.ca.gov

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Visit us on the web at www.sos.ca.gov/archives

For general assistance, call (916) 653-7715

For reference assistance, call (916) 653-2246
or email ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov

For event information, call (916) 653-7715
or email ArchivesEvents@sos.ca.gov

For the California Museum visit
www.californiamuseum.org

MINERVA
ONLINE CATALOG

Search our online catalog at
www.sos.ca.gov/archives/minerva

ATHENA
RECORDS RETENTION
SCHEDULES

Search state agency
records retention schedules at
www.sos.ca.gov/archives/athena



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